AN ANALYTICAL STUDY ON SOCIAL NETWORKING AMONG THE YOUTH

(Synopsis)

INTRODUCTION

According to the Cambridge Dictionary, youth is a period of life when a person is young or the state of being young. At the onset of this stage, individuals begin contemplating aspects such as education, vocational training, employment, and marriage, many of which they aim to achieve by the end of this period. Globally, a significant portion of the population falls under the youth. The growth of the youth population is closely linked to societal transformation (Mac Intosh, et.t.al, 2020).

According to the Ministry of Health and Family Welfares 2021 report, there were 3,71,426 individuals in India aged between 15 and 29 years, comprising 1,94,576 males and 1,76,850 females. Youth accounted for 27.3 percent of the total population. Based on Census 2021, India's population was approximately 1.3 billion, with those aged 15–29 years forming a considerable part of the demographic landscape. The National Youth Policy 2017 defines 'youth' as individuals between the ages of 15 to 34 years.

As of the latest statistics, approximately 5.56 billion people around the world use social networking platforms, representing 67.9 percent of the global population. Social networking serves as a powerful tool for communication and engagement with a wide audience. Among young people, there are generally two types of social networkers. In Kerala, 22.1 percent of youth are in the state among the total population. As reported by Chaffey (2024), 5.04 billion individuals actively use social media, with 266 million new users joining in the past few years. On average, people spend two hours and 23 minutes per day on these platforms.

Technological advancement has led to substantial changes in urban lifestyles. In contrast, rural communities still largely revolve around family bonds and traditional practices. Urban residents, often associated with higher socio-economic status are less inclined to engage with neighbors or participate in social matters. As a result, social isolation is a common issue in urban environments (Sanders and Scanion, 2021).

Operational Definitions

a) Analytical Study:

In social science research, an analytical study involves a detailed examination of data to identify patterns, relationships, and causal connections between variables. Such studies enable the development of insightful conclusions that support evidence based decision making and policy formulation (Soren, 2023).

b) Social Networking:

Social networking refers to a network of individuals such as friends, acquaintances, or colleagues connected through interpersonal relationships, websites, or online services. These platforms facilitate the creation and maintenance of relationships over the Internet (Halston et al., 2019).

c) Youth:

Youth is the transitional stage between childhood and adulthood. It is characterized as a period of exploring different roles and identities, relatively free from rigid societal norms and obligations, while gradually preparing individuals to become active, contributing members of society (Chandrashekar and Shivanna, 2020).

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The review of literature about the study entitled '**An Analytical Study on Social Networking Among the Youth'** is discussed under the following headings**:**

1. Social Networking Sites and the Growth Potential of Youth
2. Use of Social Networking and Development of the Society.
3. The Social Networking Leads to Misguided Society
4. Review of Related Studies

Mahwish Rabia et al. (2020) conducted a research study titled "Influence of Social Media on Youngsters: A Case Study in Government College for Women University, Sialkot," which examined the effects of social media on youth. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire distributed to 375 female respondents who participated in the survey. The results were analyzed using percentage distribution and regression analysis. The study found that 59 percent of respondents strongly agreed that social media helps create awareness. The study highlighted both the positive and negative impacts of social media, concluding that its proper use can lead to greater satisfaction, enhanced communication skills, and improved educational outcomes.

Joaquin Castillo De Mesa et al. (2020) conducted a study titled "Social Networking Sites and Youth Transition: The Use of Facebook and the Personal Well-being of Young Social Work Graduates.*"* The research focused on understanding how digitalization affects young people, particularly those transitioning into professional life. The aim was to assess the digital skills of youth and their impact on personal well being, with attitudes measured using a Likert scale. The study explored five key digital skills bridging social capital, self-esteem, life achievement, personal satisfaction, and social bonding. It

emphasized the importance of digital knowledge and skills for social workers, especially in navigating platforms like Facebook.

Umarani and Padmalosani (2019) analyzed a study aimed to analyze the "Impact of Social Media on Youth", the study focused on finding out the usage of social media and its influence and proper usage. The researcher collected data based on the survey method belong the age group of 20 - 25 years. The 150 responses were collected through a questionnaire, The convenience method was used, and the chi-square test and regression analysis were used as statistical tools. Furthermore, 104 respondents say they have lost their critical thinking ability. The study resulted in positive and negative usage.

RESEARCH GAP

The highlighted research gap shows that social networking and youth are a wide variety of possible areas to research. Here, most of the studies were conducted not focused on both urban and rural perspectives and the same, and students and employed were not focused on the same study. Most of the studies needed more educational or awareness programmes to lead society to empower. The research study guides the youth in focusing on social networking better and properly**.**

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

With the advent of social networking, everyone needs to achieve social networking literacy. However, social networking often has both positive and negative effects. It was essential to identify and solve the problems. The study aimed to create awareness among the youth and found any disparity in social networking between rural and urban youth. Recognizing the need for social networking, the researcher identified the research problem and selected the research problem as 'An Analytical Study on Social Networking Among the Youth' for the study. At the same time, the investigator found a focus group and found a solution to their problem through need based awareness programmes.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The youth intend to record different opinions through social networking and how they evaluate the current social networking area as relevant. They were a mixed bag of merits and demerits. Youth development needs to find solutions and move forward. Youth generally need time to get an education to get a regular job, early married youth who have lost their jobs due to marriage, those who were living non productively, those who have yet to see their earnings, and those who were unsure about the future. As far as social networking was possible for them, transcending living standards and living conditions and having economic development would brighten the future of the youth.

Primary Objectives of the Study

- To understand and explore social networking among the selected youth

Secondary Objectives of the Study

- To know the socio-demographic profile of the youth
- To identify the social networking knowledge of rural and urban youth
- To find out the attitude towards social networking in rural and urban youth
- To assess the social networking usage and impact of social networking on youth
- To educate the focus group and to create awareness through a short movie
- Find out the personal experience in social networking usage and problems through case studies

Hypotheses of the Study

- 1. H_0 = There is no significant association between location of the youth and social networking knowledge
- 2. H_0= There is no significant association between location of the youth and attitudes towards social networking (Emotional, Behavioural, Positive, and Negative)
- 3. H_0=There is no significant association between the location of the youth and social networking usage

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

The present study adopted a multistage sampling method. In the first stage, the purposive sampling method was used to select Thiruvananthapuram District from among the fourteen districts of Kerala. Within this district, for rural areas, Nedumangad taluk and Trivandrum Corporation were selected for the study. From Nedumangad taluk, villages such as Tholicode, Vithura, and Vellanad were selected, and from the urban area, Vellayambalam, Thampanoor, and Vattiyoorkavu were chosen. For this study, youth were defined as individuals aged 15-34 years, and samples were selected from both rural and urban areas. A total of 600 samples were selected, 300 from rural youth and 300 from urban youth, using the Random Sampling Method. Among the rural youth, 150 samples were from student youth and 150 samples were from employed youth. Similarly, among the urban youth, 150 samples were students and 150 employed youth. The study used a combination of purposive and random sampling methods to select the area and samples, aiming to determine the differences between rural and urban youth in social networking knowledge, attitude, and usage.

Primary data were collected through interviews, observations, pre and post test, and focus groups. An interview schedule was used to gather relevant information during the initial phase of the research. After conducting a pilot study, the data collection tools were validated based on feedback and recommendations from various experts. Secondary data was collected from Journals, Magazines, Articles, Websites, Books, Newspapers, and Reports of the Government.

To conduct the data collection, suitable educational institutes were identified in rural and urban areas, and necessary permissions were obtained from authorities. Informed consent was obtained from participating student youth and employed youth, ensuring that they understood the study's purpose, scope, and confidentiality. Employed youth were approached through professional networks, social media, and public spaces, with a clear introduction and explanation of the study's purpose.

A focus group was identified from the narratives of interviewees, allowing for a more in-depth exploration of specific themes or issues that emerged during the interviews. To raise awareness about the topic, a short movie was created, which served as an educational tool to inform or influence participants understanding or attitudes. Powerpoint presentations were used to convey key information to participants, and pre test and post test assessments were conducted to evaluate the impact of these presentations on their knowledge or attitudes. Additionally, case studies were conducted with 10 respondents through face-to-face interviews using a prepared interview schedule, enabling an in-depth examination of individual experiences, perspectives, or behaviors related to the study's topic. Although case studies typically involve open ended questions, here close ended questions were also used to gather specific information. The data collected were analyzed using a case study approach, involving a detailed examination of individual studies.

The collected data were coded, tabulated, and statistically analyzed using descriptive and analytical statistical methods in SPSS software. The analyzed data provided the necessary insights for drawing inferences and conclusions. Statistical tools such as percentage analysis, graphical representations, Cramér's V correlation, and chi-square tests were employed to analyse the collected data using SPSS statistical package.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The major findings of the study are discussed briefly in the following sections:

The Socio-Demographic Profile of the Youth

- Age: Among the selected youth, the majority 100 percent of rural and urban student youth were between 15 and 24 years of age. Similarly, 57 percent of employed youth were in the age group of 25 to 34 years.

- Gender: Among the rural student youth, majority 67 percent were female and 65 percent of urban student youth were male.
- Education: Regarding the educational qualification of the youth, 57 percent of the rural student youth have qualified in higher secondary education but urban student youth showed the Diploma as the qualification possessed by 37 percent.
- Marital Status: Majority cent percent of student youth including both rural and urban were unmarried. Among employed youth, 62 percent of the rural employed youth were unmarried and 52 percent of urban employed youth were married.
- Family Type: Among the selected youth 55 percent of rural student youth, 67 percent of urban student youth, 74 percent of rural employed youth and 64 percent of urban employed youth were belonging to nuclear family system.
- Annual Family Income: The highest 85 percent of the rural student youth have the annual income of below Rs.1,00,000. With regard to the annual income of employed youth, majority 95 percent of the rural employed youth belong to the category of below Rs.1,00,000.
- Status of Residency: Majority 93 percent of the rural student youth's parents and 84 percent of the urban student youth's parents stay with their wards. Similarly, 54 percent of spouse married rural employed youth and urban employed youth stay with them.
- These demographics suggest that social networking is an integral part of the daily lives of student and employed youth in Trivandrum, Kerala, with females and graduates being more active users. The study also highlights the importance of communication through social networking, especially among married employed youth who use it to maintain relationships and bridge geographical gaps.

Social Networking Knowledge Among Youth

- Rural and urban youth are more knowledgeable on social networking. Among the students, particularly, rural student youth show higher knowledge in Google search engine with 93 percent compared to 92 percent of urban student youth. In regard to employed youth, rural employed youth showed a cent percent of knowledge on social networking operations.
- Communication platforms like Facebook Messenger were more familiar across all groups, with 89 percent of rural student youth and 84 percent of urban student youth being knowledgeable on that.
- WhatsApp was found to be widely known among 93 percent of rural and 56 percent of urban student youth, WhatsApp was the most widely known chat application, with 67 percent of rural and 80 percent of urban employed youth being aware of it.

- The majority 76 percent of rural student youth, 59 percent of urban student youth revealed that they know profile creation. A maximum of 57 percent of rural employed youth and 53 percent of urban employed youth expressed that they are knowledgeable in new video upload.
- A majority 80 percent of rural student youth and 79 percent of urban student youth expressed that they opened social networking page by themselves for social networking operations. As far as employed youth is concerned 66 percent of rural employed youth and 63 percent of urban employed youth were also expressing that they themselves assisted in opening social networking page.
- Among the selected youth 47 percent of rural student youth and 72 percent of urban student youth update status depending upon situation. Among employed youth category, 45 percent of rural employed youth and 41 percent of urban employed youth update status based on situation.
- In connection to youth knowledge on social networking intension, a majority 88 percent of rural student youth and 81 percent of urban student youth prioritize communication as the primary intension. Most 61 percent of employed youth possess knowledge of using social networking for communication purposes.
- Majority 84 percent of rural student youth and 56 percent of urban student youth aware that knowledge development is one of the benefits of social networking, followed by 47 percent of rural employed youth and 59 percent of urban employed youth.
- A majority 64 percent of rural student youth and 65 percent of urban student youth use social networking for educational purposes. Less than half, 45 percent of rural employed and 48 percent of urban employed youth show interest in the use of social networking for educational purposes.
- The social networking knowledge of the youth and location of the youth have significant association, based on testing of hypothesis through Cramer's V correlation analysis. It is proved that there is a significant association between the location of youth and social networking knowledge.

Attitude of Youth Towards Social Networking

- Among the selected youth, 64 percent of the rural student youth agreed that social networking helps to maintain the relationship. Sixty percent of the urban student youth agreed that social networking content creation is used to express attitude without fear. Similar to rural student youth, 60 percent of rural employed youth expressed that social networking helps to maintain relationships.
- Social networking is mostly not an interesting area was disagreed by 47 percent of rural students indicating that they were interested in social networking activities. In contrast, 47 percent of urban

employed agreed with the statement not an interested area due to busy work schedules or a preference to save time.

- Among selected student youth, 64 percent of rural student youth strongly agreed a positive attitude towards social networking provides knowledge and opportunities. Among employed youth 80 percent of the rural employed positively agreed that social networking is used to express their attitude without fear.
- Among student youth, 45 percent of urban student youth strongly agreed that due to the social networking usage, faced huge privacy issues and lots of fake accounts. Among employed youth 68 percent of the rural employed youth agreed that social networking have fraudulent activities.

Cramer's V Correlation Analysis-Association Between Location of Youth and Knowledge, Attitude of the Selected Youth

Cramer invented the Cramer's V correlation to measure the association between two categorical variables. It was based on the chi-square test. The ordinal and nominal variables must contain two or more independent groups. The Cramer's V ranges from 0 to 1.

- The social networking knowledge of the youth and location of the youth have significant association, which was tested the hypothesis through Cramer's V correlation. The results show that for all 11 knowledge aspects of social networking, it is proved that there is a significant association between location of youth and social networking knowledge.
- The emotional attitude of the youth was tested through Cramer's V correlation. Here, the findings revealed that a significant association between the location of youth (urban vs. rural) and their emotional attitudes of youth towards social networking. The Cramer's V correlation coefficients indicate a moderate to strong association between the variables, ranging from 0.516 to 0.874. It is proved that there is a significant association between the location of youth and social networking emotional attitudes.
- The behavioral attitude of the youth was tested through Cramer's V correlation. The Cramer's V correlation coefficients indicate a moderate to strong association between the variables, ranging from 0.606 to 0.832. Regarding student youth, out of the 11 statements related to the behavioral attitude of the youth, six aspects showed a strong association and the remaining 5 showed moderate association. The highest association is seen in 'Fear in Social Media Isolation' with a correlation value of 0.832. The lowest correlation is seen in 'Needs some changes for active participation' with the V value of 0.606. It is proved that there is a significant association between the location of youth and social networking behavioral attitudes.

- The positive attitude of the youth was tested through Cramer's V correlation. The p values are less than 0.005, indicating a highly significant association between the location of youth (rural and urban) and the positive attitudes towards social networking. The Cramer's V correlation of the student youth category ranges from 0.724 to 0.967, indicating a strong positive association between the variables. It is proved that there is a significant association between location of youth and social networking positive attitudes.
- The negative attitude of the youth was tested through Cramer's V correlation. The p values were less than 0.005, indicating a highly significant association between the location of student youth (rural and urban) and the negative attitudes of youth towards social networking. The Cramer's V values range from 0.651 to 0.956, indicating a strong association between the variables. The results suggest that there is a significant association between the location of student youth and their negative attitudes towards social networking, with both rural and urban student youth exhibiting strong negative attitudes towards social networking use. The strongest association is found 'faced huge privacy issues and lots of fake accounts' (Cramers V = 0.956). It is proved that there is a significant association between the location of youth and social networking negative attitudes.

Analyze the Social Networking Usage and Impact on Youth

- Among student youth, a higher 67 percent of urban student youth reported that were not imitating characters from social networking usage, in contrast, among employed youth, a higher 87 percent of urban employed youth reported that they were not imitating characters from social networking usage. The null hypothesis was examined through a chi-square test, and the data of rural and urban students and rural and urban employed youth were analyzed. The p value was less than the (0.05) significance level, hence the null hypothesis is rejected. It reveals that there is a significant association between the location of youth and character imitation.
- Among student youth, the majority 87 percent of rural student youth reported that social networking improved their language proficiency. A higher proportion 85 percent of rural employed youth reported improved language proficiency through social networking. The null hypothesis was examined through a chi-square test, and the data of rural and urban students and rural and urban employed youth were analyzed. The p value was less than the (0.05) significance level, hence the null hypothesis was rejected. It reveals that there is a significant association between the location of youth and character imitation of the youth.
- Among student youth, a higher 73 percent of rural student youth reported developing caliber through social networking. Among employed youth, a higher 73 percent of rural employed youth

reported developing caliber through social networking. The null hypothesis was examined through a chi-square test, and the data of rural and urban students and rural and urban employed youth were analyzed. The p value was less than the (0.05) significance level, hence the null hypothesis is rejected. It reveals that there is a significant association between the location of the youth and the enhancement of the caliber of the youth.

- Among student youth, 67 percent of rural student youth and 64 percent of urban student youth have started making videos, indicating a high interest in video creation among both groups. Among employed youth 47 percent of rural employed youth and 63 percent of urban employed youth had started making videos, indicating a moderate interest in video creation among both groups. A higher 55 percent showed they love to make videos and post the videos to social networking sites. Other groups were significantly less. The null hypothesis was examined through a chi-square test, and the data of rural and urban students and rural and urban employed youth were analyzed. The p value was less than the (0.05) significance level, hence the null hypothesis is rejected. It reveals that there is a significant association between the location of the youth and encouraging video making of the youth.
- A higher 83 percent of rural student youth and 79 percent of rural employed youth reported developing photography skills through social networking than 76 percent of urban employed youth. The null hypothesis was examined through a chi-square test and the data of rural and urban students and rural and urban employed youth were analyzed. The p value was less than the (0.05) significance level, hence the null hypothesis is rejected. It reveals that there is significant association between the location of the youth and photography skills of the youth.
- A higher 48 percent of rural student youth and 49 percent of urban student youth reported using social networking to acquire fans/followers. Among employed youth, a higher 64 percent of rural employed youth and 29 percent of urban employed youth reported using social networking to acquire fans/followers. The null hypothesis was examined through a chi-square test, and the data of rural and urban students and rural and urban employed youth were analyzed. The p value was less than the (0.05) significance level, hence the null hypothesis was rejected. It reveals that there is a significant association between the location of the youth and acquiring fans/followers for the profile of the youth.
- A higher 81 percent of rural student youth and 79 percent of urban student youth reported not chatting with unknown people. Among employed youth, a higher 85 percent of rural employed youth and 75 percent of urban employed youth reported not chatting with unknown people. The null hypothesis was examined through a chi-square test, and the data of rural and urban students

and rural and urban employed youth were analyzed. The p value was less than the (0.05) significance level, hence the null hypothesis was rejected. It reveals that there is a significant association between the location of the youth and chat activity of the youth with strangers.

- A higher 35 percent of urban student youth had their own YouTube channels. Among employed youth, a higher 23 percent of urban employed youth had their own YouTube channels. The null hypothesis was examined through a chi-square test, and the data of rural and urban students and rural and urban employed youth were analyzed. The p value was less than the (0.05) significance level, hence the null hypothesis was rejected. It reveals that there is a significant association between the location of youth and encourages YouTube channels of the youth.
- A higher 61 percent of urban student youth spent time on online games, followed by 53 percent of rural student youth. Among employed youth, 43 percent of rural employed youth and 31 percent of urban employed youth spent time on online games. The null hypothesis was examined through a chi-square test, and the data of rural and urban students and rural and urban employed youth were analyzed. The p value was less than the (0.05) significance level, hence the null hypothesis was rejected. It reveals that there is a significant association between the location of the youth and online gaming activity of the youth.
- Among the youth, the majority 91 percent of the rural employed youth revealed they no experience of any hacking issues from the social networking sites. A higher 85 percent of the urban employed youth positively revealed they had not experienced hacking issues. The null hypothesis was examined through a chi-square test, and the data of rural and urban student youth and rural and urban employed youth were analyzed. The p value was less than the (0.05) significance level, hence the null hypothesis was rejected. It reveals that there is a significant association between the location of the youth and hacking issues of the youth.
- Among student youth, 12 percent of rural student youth and 31 percent of urban student youth reported life-threatening issues due to social networking usage. Among employed youth, 15 percent of rural employed youth and 4 percent of urban employed youth reported experiencing life-threatening issues due to social networking usage. Very little of the youth had faced life-threatening issues. The null hypothesis was examined through a chi-square test, and the data of rural and urban students and rural and urban employed youth were analyzed. The p value was less than the significance (0.05) level, hence the null hypothesis was rejected. It reveals that there is a significant association between the location of the youth and life-threatening issues faced by the youth.

- Among the selected youth, 37 percent of rural student youth and 31 percent of urban student youth reported health issues due to social networking usage. Among employed youth, the majority 71 percent of rural employed youth and 60 percent of urban employed youth reported health issues due to social networking usage. The null hypothesis was examined through a chi-square test, and the data of rural and urban students and rural and urban employed youth were analyzed. The p value was less than the (0.05) significance level, hence the null hypothesis was rejected. It reveals that there is a significant association between the location of the youth and health problems issues due to social networking.
- Among youth, 95 percent of rural student youth and 89 percent of urban student youth expressed their interest in social networking sites. This trend is more pronounced among employed youth with 100 percent of rural employed youth and 96 percent of urban employed youth showing interest. The null hypothesis was examined through a chi-square test, and the responses of rural and urban students and rural and urban employed youth were analyzed. The p value was less than the (0.05) significance level, hence the null hypothesis was rejected. It reveals that there is a significant association between the location and the interested area of the youth.
- Among the selected youth, 59 percent of rural students and 51 percent of urban students believed that social networking provides job opportunities. A majority of 76 percent of rural employed youth and 79 percent of urban employed youth believed that social networking provides job opportunities. The null hypothesis was examined through a chi-square test, and the responses of rural and urban students and rural and urban employed youth were analyzed. The p value was less than the (0.05) significance level, hence the null hypothesis was rejected. It reveals that there is a significant association between the location of the youth and enhanced job opportunities of the youth.
- Among the selected youth, a higher 81 percent of urban student youth and 84 percent of employed youth facing social issues. The majority 79 percent of student youth and 91 percent of employed youth reported facing social issues. The null hypothesis was examined through a chi-square test, and rural and urban students and rural and urban employed youth were analyzed. The p value was less than the (0.05) significance level, hence the null hypothesis was rejected. It reveals that there is a significant association between the location of the youth and major social problems arising in society.

Impact of Awareness Programme of the Study (Pre and Post assessment) among the Focus Group

- Among the youth, rural student youth showed the highest 86 participants in the focused group, followed by 66 rural employed youth. Similarly, 50 urban student youth and 26 urban employed

youth showed relatively lower participation in the focus group. The total number of participants from rural areas was 136 which was higher than the 92 participants of urban areas.

- A significant improvement in knowledge was observed among student and employed youth, with notable differences between rural and urban populations. Among students, rural students initially scored low on the pre test, with a score of 7, while urban students scored slightly higher at 14. However, after the awareness, both groups demonstrated substantial knowledge improvement, with scores increasing to 84-100.
- Employed youth also showed a significant gain in knowledge. Rural employed youth had a lower initial score of 18 compared to urban employed youth, who scored 42. Following the awareness programmes both groups showed significant knowledge improvement, with scores ranging from 83-100.

Personal Experience of Youth on Social Networking Usages-Case Study

- Social networking had a positive impact but suggested advancements like privacy enhancement, reducing abuse, and promoting positive content. A few predicted social media would have a more educational and opportunistic impact in the future. The youth recognized social networking benefits and drawbacks, emphasizing the need for responsible usage and advancements to ensure a safer online experience.
- The case study indicated that each person's view of social networking and their specific vision is different, and they all arise from their own circumstances. Everyone recognizes right and wrong. However, their benefits are pre-empted and prepared to go ahead with the right arrangements. Youth see value in their experiences rather than inflows.

These concerns were shared by both rural and urban students and employed. The study emphasizes the importance of social networking and promoting responsible social media networking among youth to maximize its benefits while minimizing its harm.

CONCLUSION:

This study investigates the knowledge, attitude and use of social networking among youth in Thiruvananthapuram district, Kerala, focusing on both urban and rural areas. It aims to understand the knowledge, attitudes, and usage patterns of social networking of youth. Employing a mixed-method research design that combines quantitative and qualitative approaches, the study reveals that social networking has both positive and negative impacts on youth. The findings highlight the importance of promoting responsible social networking usage and educating youth

about the potential risks associated with social networking. Both rural and urban youth benefit from social networking, but they also experience negative consequences. They have developed emotional, behavioral, positive, and negative attitudes towards social networking. While social networking offers opportunities for growth and development, its negative aspects need to be addressed. The study suggests that education and awareness are essential to guide youth in using social networking sites effectively and responsibly. The availability of internet access enables rural youth to access modern amenities similar to urban youth, bridging the existing marginalization. The findings emphasize the need for targeted awareness programs and education to minimize harm and maximize benefits, ultimately contributing to more inclusive and connected communities.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Recommendations for the Youth

- Youth should educate themselves to install social networking applications, only after analyzing the pros and cons of the application.
- To avoid health issues, balance between online activities by setting boundaries for usage and screen time.
- Social networking sites can be used for productive purposes. Such as educational, employment and entrepreneurship.

Recommendations for the App developers

- Limiting word counts for commenting.
- Sending and receiving of images and videos can be done based on mutual consent.
- Limiting the using hours per day should be set by social networking sites depending on their profession or user profile.
- Notification of searchers details should come up to individual profile users.

Recommendations for the Government

- Recommend authenticating ID proof for opening social networking accounts to reduce the multiple fake account ID users, harassment, and cyberbullying.
- The usage and creation of social networking accounts must be strict for those under 18 years old.
- Cyber law should be more active to reduce the malpractices.

- All social networking applications need authority to coordinate and verify for public usage.
- The government can initiate programmes for reducing the rural-urban disparities effectively in rural areas through establishment of social networking infrastructure.

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